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Abstract

This article examines the representation of the United Nations in speeches delivered by its Secretary-General (SG). It focuses on the role of metaphor in constructing a common 'imagining' of international diplomacy and legitimizing an international organizational identity. The SG legitimizes the organization, in part, through the delegitimization of agents/actions/events constructed as threatening to the international community and to the well-being of mankind. It is a desire to combat the forces of menace or evil which are argued to motivate and determine the organizational agenda. This is predicated upon an international ideology of humanity in which difference is silenced and 'working towards the common good' is emphasized. This is exploited to rouse emotions and legitimize institutional power. Polarization and antithesis are achieved through the employment of metaphors designed to enhance positive and negative evaluations. The article further points to the constitutive, persuasive and edifying¹ power of topic and situationally motivated metaphors in speech-making.

Keywords

critical metaphor theory, diplomacy, identity, international organizations, metaphor, organizational identity, workplace agendas

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1. Introduction

The role of the United Nations (UN) has made headline news and penetrated public ideology; however, public understanding of the structure and function of the organization remains comparatively limited due to the sensitive and specialized nature of its work. Although there are many texts detailing the functions of the organization with respect to politics and international relations (e.g. Mertus, 2009; Weiss and Daws, 2008; Weiss et al., 2010), linguistic studies remain comparatively limited (although see Duchêne, 2008; McEntee-Atalianis, 2006, 2008, in press; Pearl, 1996). This scarcity has to be set against burgeoning research on the impact of global integration on language practice and identity as shown in work investigating sites and communities of international integration, such as the European Union (e.g. Wodak, 2004), in addition to emerging research on the language of political leadership (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006; Chilton, 2006).

Leaders of international organizations (such as the UN) are vital guardians and 'primary definers' (Flowerdew and Leong, 2007) of their institutions: fundamental in overseeing and directing internal operations, but also vital to the representation and communication of the values, mission and work of their organizations, both internally to their membership and externally to public audiences. This article seeks to uncover the discursive strategies employed by the Secretary-General of one UN agency (The International Maritime Organization [IMO]) in his representation of the organization and its work. It specifically focuses on his use of metaphor, investigating how this is employed to construct a unified collective identity and workplace agenda which serves to legitimize the work of diplomats involved in global maritime issues. The latter is predicated on a discourse of global ethics and morality which serves to construct a conceptualization of international politics and relations based on a normative ideology of universally shared experiences, goals and objectives.

Before discussing the more specific aims of the study, a review of recent research on metaphor theory and analysis and studies of metaphor in political texts is presented.

2. Background

2.1. Metaphor theory and analysis

Proponents of Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT), drawing on the work of Lakoff and colleagues (e.g. Lakoff, 1987, 1993; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980/2003, 1999; Lakoff and Turner, 1989), argue that metaphors are more than mere figurative expressions but are vehicles through which we represent, think and feel about one thing in relation to another. Understanding is not isolated to concepts but is based upon 'entire domains of experience' (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003: 117). These give rise to image-schemas or structured gestalts providing frames of representation and experience (e.g. representing features such as cause and effect; component parts or stages of development; experience with substances or objects; orientation and spatial awareness). Abstractions may therefore be represented metaphorically via concrete representations arising out of sensory and motor experiences which give rise to embodied meaning. The latter in turn influence the way in which we engage emotionally and intellectually with events/concepts/issues/people. These mappings may become conventionalized and naturalized

(although there may be individual and cultural differences over time and space – see discussion below) such that we may think and experience abstract concepts in concrete terms. For example, we often express our emotions in relation to the bodily experience of spatial orientation (feeling up/down) or natural phenomenon such as ‘fire’ (‘a *burning* love that *fizzled out*’). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) illustrate how the concept of ARGUMENT is presented via a systematic mapping onto a more concrete concept of WAR: ‘we don’t just talk about arguments in terms of war. We can actually win or lose arguments. We see the person we are arguing with as an opponent. We attack his position and we defend our own . . .’ (p. 4).

Such complexity of metaphor structure is conceived of in terms of a mapping from a ‘target’ domain, an ‘abstraction’ or experience being referred to (e.g. ARGUMENT), to a ‘source’ domain, the concrete or familiar concept, often made resonant through our embodied experience (e.g. WAR). In order to interpret metaphorical meaning one must be able to perceive the semantic mapping/correspondences from the source to the target domain. These may also carry with them evaluative and emotive features. Mappings may be partial across domains, as referred to by Kövecses (2010: 103) as ‘metaphorical highlighting’, and therefore limit the interpretation and discussion of certain concepts. Alternatively, although less frequently, conventionalized/common mappings may be extended creatively, such that innovative metaphorical expressions may emerge and lead to the creation of new conceptual material. For example, LIFE is often mapped onto the domain of JOURNEY, such that reference is made conventionally and euphemistically to the ‘arrival’ of a baby and the ‘departure’ of a loved one. However, one could extend this mapping to communicate more particular meanings, for example, a telegram once sent by a relative on the birth of his son read, ‘PARCEL ARRIVED SAFELY. TASSLE ATTACHED’.

CMT represents metaphors such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY as ‘image schemas’, with the latter relating to the schema of a PATH. Within this schema certain features may be anticipated, embedded and mapped psychologically, such concepts as: a goal; a mode of transport; movement from point A (point of departure) to B (destination); direction of movement; speed of movement, and there may even be impediments/difficulties that may be encountered along the way.

CMT has undergone development in recent years² (e.g. see Grady, 1997; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980/2003) with accounts using corpora to identify frequency and patterns of use across and within a range of spoken and written texts (e.g. Cameron and Deignan, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2004; Deignan, 2005; Holmgreen, 2008; Semino, 2008). Researchers have begun to recognize the importance of context, culture and speaker motivation and goals on metaphor choice and function, and to identify the nuances of situated and strategic metaphorical realization, detailing variation within and across texts, contexts and cultures. Replicable frameworks have arisen from this work including for example methodological and analytic procedures arising from ‘Critical Metaphor Theory’ (Charteris-Black, 2004) and the ‘Metaphor Identification Procedure’ (MIP) (Pragglejazz Group, 2007), in addition to a plethora of accounts of metaphorical performance within/across speakers and communities of language users.

A notable development in recent years (as noted by Semino, 2008: 10) has been in the reconceptualization of ‘mental representations’ leading to a reconsideration of

theoretical structures such as ‘image-schemas’ and ‘conceptual domains’ in accounting for metaphorical data. Reference is now made to more refined conceptual material, such as ‘scenes’ (e.g. Grady, 1997) or ‘scenarios’ (Musolff, 2004), which depict representations of particular situations and their associated features/characteristics. For example, the conceptual domain of ILLNESS may be considered in narrower terms such as CONTAGIOUS DISEASES, which carries with it more particular associations (see below).

A further development has been in the recognition of the importance of combining both cognitive and pragmatic considerations in the investigation of metaphor.³ Here the value of Teun van Dijk’s (2008) socio-cognitive approach is recognized as a useful explanatory framework in the analysis of metaphorical expressions by speakers in different situations. ‘In this perspective, the choice of metaphor will be partly contingent on embodied meaning, personal and social experience as well as the interpretation of the actual communicative situation . . .’ (Holmgreen, 2008: 104).

2.2. *Metaphor and politics*

The instrumental value and persuasive power of metaphor in public oratory has been recognized since antiquity; nevertheless contemporary accounts of metaphor in political discourse have become ubiquitous (e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006; Chilton and Ilyin, 1993; Chilton and Schäffner, 1997; Flowerdew and Leong, 2007; Lakoff, 1990, 1992; Ngonyani, 2002; Obeng, 2002; Rohrer, 1991, 1995; Santa Ana, 1999; Semino, 2008; Straehle et al., 1999; Wodak et al., 2009). Studies have sought to: test theoretical and analytical frameworks; identify and explain patterns of use across a range of speakers and texts; and describe their rhetorical power in the representation and legitimization of contemporary political issues and leadership. All concur that metaphors are far from mere literary tropes but serve as fundamental components of political and leadership language, facilitating both the communication of abstract and complex concepts, whilst also performing vital strategic functions through the structuring of political thought and activities.

An extensive body of literature on the rhetorical power of metaphor in political discourse (see e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006; Rohrer, 1995; Semino, 2008), and more specifically in the construction and representation of (supra)national identities and policies in political and media texts (e.g. De Cillia et al., 1999; Musolff, 2001, 2003; Schäffner, 1996; Wodak et al., 2009), has emerged over the past decade or so. For example, Lakoff (1991) has shown how metaphors are used to explain international relations and justify war (see also Jansen and Sabo, 1994, in relation to the latter). Chilton (1996) and Thornborrow (1993) have reported on the metaphors of ‘security’ employed in texts throughout the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. Straehle et al. (1999) report on European Union discourse on unemployment, and Chilton (1996), Chilton and Ilyin (1993) and Musolff (2000) have shown how imagery derived from source metaphors may be extended or altered over time in symmetry with changing socio-political circumstances.

Musolff (2000), for example, discusses the realization of the source metaphors of HOUSE and CONSTRUCTION in British and German media texts and identifies

differences in their use in national debates. He notes changes to the thematic concept of *'Europe-as a-house'* from the positive image of an integrated and almost completed building project to the negative images of a delayed construction project or a building with 'structural deficiencies'. These shifting conceptualizations correspond with policy change but also illustrate source domain flexibility (changes to the concrete conceptualization of the 'house') in relation to divergent target domains, thereby mitigating against any deterministic interpretation of source domain mappings and reflecting the great flexibility of metaphors in their ability to render alternative conceptualizations. Musolff (2000) illustrates how the same source metaphor may have different argumentative functions in different discourse communities and national contexts. He reports on the role of MARITIME and TRANSPORT metaphors in structuring imagery of member roles and attitudes towards the European Union.

Yet other scholars (e.g. De Cillia et al., 1999; Washington University Discourse Analysis Group [WAUDAG], 1990; Wodak et al., 2009) embed considerations of metaphors (along with a number of other discursive strategies), in their analysis of the linguistic construction of political and national identity. Reisigl and Wodak (2001) and Wodak et al. (2009) particularly note how metaphors (along with the tropes of metonymy and synecdoche) function to lessen difference and create group homogeneity, whilst also serving to mark group boundaries.

Throughout these studies, attention has been drawn to affective, cognitive, cultural and social dimensions and it has been recognized that all interact in the construction and interpretation of metaphorical expressions. Charteris-Black (2006) argues that metaphor is fundamental to the performance of successful leadership as it works to mediate between conscious ideology and unconscious myth. Drawing on a large corpus of speeches delivered by political and religious leaders in varied social and cultural contexts, he illustrates how speakers construct myths of themselves and their subject matter in order to arouse emotions, project an ethical stance of 'goodness' and 'badness' (p. 13) and communicate political policy. 'Successful leaders [he asserts] rely on the recurrent power of imagery to activate culturally based schema of what constitute sources of fear and forms of social menace; the aim of political policies is to eliminate this source of fear . . .' (p. 24). He argues that identifying and interpreting the systematic metaphorical choices of orators leads to an understanding of belief systems (/ideology) and how they are expressed via 'political myths'.⁴ It is through these that groups construct meanings in order to justify their actions and existence.

Chilton (1985, 1996, 2006) and Chilton and Schäffner (1997, 2002) similarly acknowledge the role of affective, cognitive and social processes in individual and collective representations and interpretations of political discourse. They argue that metaphors predominantly function strategically to represent a reality and are therefore used by politicians and leaders to coerce, (de)legitimize and (mis)represent people, actions and events.

Metaphors, along with other rhetorical strategies, therefore serve to accomplish linguistic and ideological work: to reflect and construct social identities and relationships (positively or negatively); to define values and to accomplish (de)legitimization. Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2003) argue that they are not only conceptual devices utilized to frame an existing reality but are also constitutive of social and political reality in their own right. Through the selective mapping of features from target to source domain, certain qualities/

aspects may be made resonant whilst others are silenced. This, in turn, may influence audience perceptions and behaviour (both of themselves and others) and help to construct mythic⁵ meanings which justify the existence and behaviour of any group or organization. Critical linguists argue that the relationship between social identity and language is constitutive. Social identities are (co)-constructed in and through discourse, whilst discourses themselves may also become sites of contestation. Van Dijk (1989, 2008) has suggested that ideologies underpin group beliefs and 'social representations'. He recounts for example how studies of racism in news media in Western Europe have found repeated and persistent references to immigrants in negative and threatening terms, as invading forces or natural disasters (e.g. as 'avalanches' or 'waves'), influencing the way in which audiences both perceive and talk about these individuals or groups.

3. Aims of the study

This article seeks to extend the current body of research on metaphors in political discourse and leadership language in national contexts to consider the enactment of leadership in and on behalf of an influential international organization (the United Nations, UN). The UN is considered to have tremendous influence on the course of global politics; established to promote and assist in international peace-keeping and the prevention of conflict, and also involved in more specialized functions such as environmental protection, the promotion of human rights and social and economic development. This study has implications not only for research on the rhetoric of contemporary global leadership and international relations/integration, but also for studies investigating the construction and representation of organizational identity and practice.

The article also takes up Semino's (2008) call to investigate the nature and incidence of topic and situationally triggered metaphors within specific discourse communities in a bid to understand why certain metaphorical choices are made. The potential influence of the SG's identity and discursive goals; his relationship with the audience and subject matter; and the influence of pertinent co-text and context on metaphor choice are therefore considered.

Speeches delivered by the Secretary-General (Mr Efthimios Mitropoulos) of an agency of the UN, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), are analysed. It will become evident that conventional political metaphors are employed in the depiction of the organization as an 'entity' and in the description of the 'processes' in which it is engaged, in addition to topic/situationally motivated metaphors which index the professional and ethnic/cultural identity of the SG himself, and reflect sensitivity both to the material under discussion and the audiences addressed (e.g. trainee sea-farers).

4. Methodology

4.1. Data

Data for this study was derived from the International Maritime Organization (IMO). IMO was established in 1958 as a specialized agency of the United Nations, founded to facilitate cooperation among governments in matters of international shipping including trade, maritime pollution, safety and navigation. Situated in London, its current

membership stands at 169 Member States. Its broad function is to make recommendations in light of matters brought to its attention by its Members or any agency/organ of the United Nations or non-governmental body. In practice it convenes conferences, drafts agreements, conventions or any other necessary instruments, provides/and facilitates technical co-operation and recommends these to intergovernmental organizations and governments (see McEntee-Atalianis, 2006, for further details about the function and structure of the organization).

The SG is currently Mr Efthimios Mitropoulos, a Greek national with extensive personal and professional experience in shipping. Although involved with IMO for a number of years, he took up office as SG in 2003 and is due to complete his term in December 2011. (For a more comprehensive biography please see: <http://www.imo.org/MediaCentre/SecretaryGeneral/Pages/Biography.aspx>.)

The corpus of data analysed in this study consists of 11 speeches delivered over a period of three and half years from 2007 to 2010 (see Table 1 for details) to audiences situated both within and outside the organization in different national, professional and socio-cultural contexts. Speeches were accessed via the IMO website (www.imo.org/MediaCentre/SecretaryGeneral/SpeechesByTheSecretaryGeneral/Pages/Default.aspx).

Criteria for selection (or exclusion) were based on the stated or underlying aim or purpose of the speeches, which was to present a current perspective of IMO work priorities to interested parties. The only exception to the latter is the case of the '26th Assembly Opening Address' which was delivered within the organization to its members. This speech reported on the work of the institution over the previous two years and made recommendations to the Assembly about the future agenda of IMO. It was considered suitable for analysis due to its summative and directive content which focused generally on the work of the organization.

4.2. Metaphor identification and critical metaphor analysis

Speeches were analysed using the 'Metaphor Identification Procedure' (MIP) (Pragglejazz Group, 2007) and Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black, 2006). These were employed in the selection and analysis of data, combining both cognitive and pragmatic considerations.

Metaphorical expressions were identified using MIP:

- i) Speeches were read initially to establish a general understanding of content and meaning;
- ii) Lexical units⁶ were identified;
- iii) Meaning of lexical units was determined in context;
- iv) The status of the meaning of lexical units was made, i.e. establishing whether the lexical unit had a more fundamental/basic meaning (i.e. related to embodied experience or action; more concrete or older historically);
- v) If it was determined that the lexical unit had a more basic contemporary meaning in other texts/contexts compared to the context under exploration, and if the contextual meaning could be understood in comparison to this, then the lexical unit was considered as 'metaphorical'.

Table 1. Speeches analysed

Date	Purpose/title of speech	Location
February 2007	The Work of the International Maritime Organization	Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens, Greece
May 2007	'IMO: Present-day activity and further development' (SG bestowed with Honorary Doctorate)	Odessa National Maritime Academy, Odessa, Ukraine
May 2009	Acceptance Speech (SG bestowed with Honorary Doctorate)	University of Malta, Malta
June 2009	Keynote address entitled: 'Global Challenges'	NATSHIP 09 – Australia's National Shipping Industry Conference, Sydney, Australia
June 2009	Keynote address	International Maritime Education Forum, Dalian Maritime University, China
September 2009	Opening speech entitled: 'Challenges Facing Shipping and IMO'	Maritime Cyprus, Conference entitled: 'A Changing Climate: Emerging Opportunities', Cyprus
September 2009	'IMO Priorities'	Visit to the Republic of Iran (Audience: Iranian Minister; Navy; Ports and Maritime Organization; Iran's maritime community; media representatives)
November 2009	26th Assembly Opening Address	IMO Headquarters, London, UK
May 2010	General Assembly Informal Meeting on Piracy. Statement on the: 'Global character of piracy and the crucial role of the UN and co-operation amongst Member States in combating the scourge.'	UN Headquarters, New York, USA
June 2010	Speech to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Forum	OCIMF (Oil Companies International Marine Forum) 40th Anniversary Dinner, Middle Temple, London, UK
May 2010	'Piracy around the world and the role of IMO'	European Security and Defence Assembly

Drawing on Semino (2008), emphasis was placed on identifying patterns of metaphorical expressions within and across speeches in order to identify their rhetorical function and their textual role. This included identifying: *repetitive* realizations of the same lexical forms; *recurrent* realizations of different metaphorical expressions relating to the same 'source domain' or scenario; identifying *clusters* of metaphorical forms in particular sections of the speech/es; and metaphorical *extension*, whereby many metaphorical expressions, drawing on the same scenario or source domain, were used to

represent the same issue/topic in close connection with one another. Situational and topic-motivated metaphors (i.e. where the source domain is connected to the situation/context in which the speech is made or where the source domain is related to the topic under discussion) were also identified.

Having isolated the conceptual metaphors, the ideological implications and motivations behind their selection were finally considered in an attempt 'to explain *why* these metaphors were chosen by illustrating *how* they create political myths' (Charteris-Black, 2006: 28).

5. Results

5.1. Preliminary account

Throughout all speeches the SG mythically depicts IMO as a unified vivacious entity; a positive life force, working on behalf of global citizens to eradicate the forces of evil and menace which dominate the current political landscape and the assumed concerns of the audience. Four key themes are mentioned repeatedly as global concerns and work priorities for the organization: the global economic crisis; piracy; global warming; and pollution. These are constructed as negative forces, threatening both to the values of the organization and to mankind. An evaluative framework is established through the use of contrasting schemata and chains of metaphor. These chains combine throughout the narrative to establish polarized constructions of good and evil in order to enhance positive and/or negative evaluations, thereby rhetorically supporting an argument for the existence of the organization. A dominant theme is created in which global threats, such as piracy and global warming, will cause death and destruction to mankind and the planet unless stopped by the combined forces of good as evidenced in the identity, mission and might of IMO. These antithetical realizations are discussed below, initially considering the depiction of IMO as a force for good, both as a political entity and when involved in political processes.

5.2. IMO as a political entity

Metaphorical descriptions of the organization as a living/functioning 'entity' evoke associations with the qualities of 'unification', 'strength' and 'positive (human) traits'. The metaphors of PERSON and VEHICLE/MACHINE occur repetitively and recurrently intra- and intertextually; whilst metaphors of positive ORIENTATION are clustered in descriptions of the quality of the work and membership of the organization.

Diverse image schemas and scenarios (see 2.1 above) are drawn on in the anthromorphization of IMO, encompassing four dominant human states or experiences: life-cycle; corporeal body; family roles/membership; and occupational identity. These combine to construct a representation of the organization as sensitive to and sharing in basic human accomplishments and difficulties. Through the use of highly conventionalized metaphors, an over-arching myth is constructed of an efficacious and mature individual/agent (organization), who (which) succeeds in fulfilling multiple roles ranging from the parental to occupational, whilst maintaining the virtuous qualities of responsibility, fortitude

and protectiveness. The latter is achieved, for example, when describing the history of the organization using scenarios of life-cycle and life-span. Emphasis is placed particularly on the celebrated feature-specificity of longevity and ‘achievement’:

- (1) . . . how wonderful it really is that great maritime institutions . . . are able to celebrate . . . *milestone events in their lives – lives full of achievements* in the service of shipping. (Middle Temple, London)

Other human attributes of sensitivity, agility, nurturance and cognition are further rendered through the depiction of the Organization as a corporeal body(ies) with the capacity to think, plan and engage with complex issues and ‘highly specialized . . . work’. The impression created is one of organizational unity and humanity. Moreover, Kövesces (2010) notes how metaphors of upward orientation characterize positive evaluations, and the political rhetoric imbued in the SG’s speeches are no exception in this regard, for example:

- (2) Each IMO *body* has its own highly specialized and detailed work programme and the issues that must be *upper-most in the mind* of one sub-committee . . . (Odessa Academy, Ukraine)
- (3) It is partly with this *in mind* that IMO Council has chosen 2010 ‘Year of the Seafarer’. (Visit to Islamic Republic of Iran)

Significantly it was found that in most speeches the skilful imagery of youthful agility and forward progressive movement was nested within the situationally and topic-motivated schema of the ‘sea’, as illustrated in (5) below. This was employed rhetorically to illustrate the organization’s responsiveness to global change and crises, and resilience under difficult circumstances:

- (4) [In reference to the financial crisis] In our Organization we had to follow suit and *show agility to adjust and move forward*. (Maritime Cyprus, Cyprus)
- (5) As we *wade out* into 2010, we are *sailing through* events that are unimaginable when the crisis broke out.

Strength, tenacity and perseverance of the Organization are further communicated through the portrayal of a climber (8) navigating his way through difficult terrain. (Indeed, the premodification of ‘grip’ by ‘commendable quality’ further enhances the image of brilliance and virtuosity.) However, sensual qualities of touch and vision are also evident; the verb ‘embrace’ even evoking associations with the qualities of tenderness and inclusion:

- (6) ‘. . . its mandate was originally limited to safety-related issues but subsequently its remit has expanded to *embrace* environmental considerations, legal matters, technical cooperation, issues . . .’ (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)

- (7) . . . while IMO *looks* to the Copenhagen Conference to provide political insight . . . (Visit to Islamic Republic of Iran)
- (8) . . . in spite of the inherent difficulties of a continuously and rapidly changing landscape, we were able to display a commendable quality of *grip* . . . (26th Assembly Opening Address, IMO, London)

A related sense of unity and belonging within a global political community is constructed through the source domain of FAMILY, a metaphor much exploited in contemporary leadership language (see Charteris-Black, 2006). This is used to legitimate IMO's position within the UN and in relation to other political entities internationally, and enhances associations and emotional responses tied to kinship, loyalty and belonging:

- (9) IMO is a specialized agency of the UN and, as such, is part of a *family* made up of numerous other organizations . . . (Odessa, Ukraine)
- (10) The Organisation is a specialized agency of the UN, and, as such, is part of a *family*, made up of the UN itself and numerous programmes, funds, agencies and other *bodies*. (University of Malta, Malta)

However, to complement this familial and social identity, a variety of occupational personas and associated skills are engendered through contrasting and complementary representations. These combine to enhance associations with responsibility and institutional flexibility, strength and multi-competence; with the productive capacity of the organization expressed through reference to design and construction (11); whilst its tasks are depicted as being completed with the finesse and 'attention to detail' of an artist (12). Such images work strategically not only to emphasize the productive capacity of the organization but also to emphasize the cooperative nature of its work. Moreover, in the case of (12), the metaphor also serves to flatter the audience (a case of '*capatio benevolentiae*'), as the SG seeks the goodwill of his listeners at the opening of his address.

- (11) Architect/designer/builder
 - i) We also founded three high level educational establishments . . . which are *designed* to . . . (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)
 - ii) . . . we also *built up* the capacity . . .
- (12) Artist
 - i) Iran has been a keen supporter of the IMO Member State Voluntary Audit Scheme . . . helping enormously in enabling IMO to *put the finishing touches to it* . . . (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Strength, governance and paternal associations of strictness/regulation and protection are also engendered through the characterization of IMO as a warrior (13) and governor (14). Mention of 'aegis' connotes the protective shield of Zeus (argued in Greek mythology to be the father of all gods and living beings), arguably motivated by the SG's cultural/ethnic identity: the term 'aegis' resonating within his own cultural schemas of BATTLE or PARENTHOOD. Both examples combine positive allusions to containment and affect.

- (13) [Work] fall under the *aegis* of IMO. (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)
- (14) The direct output of IMO's regulatory work is a comprehensive body of international conventions . . . that . . . *govern* just about every facet of the international shipping industry. There is almost no aspect of shipping that is not *governed* or affected by . . . IMO . . . (Odessa, Ukraine)

Throughout all speeches emphasis is placed on the responsibilities of IMO to ensure a cleaner, safer environment for all; but the SG extends this moralizing and urgency to his audiences combining the rhetorical strategies of: synthetic personalization (enacted through the use of inclusive pronouns e.g. 'we'/'all'); exigence (see iii] below); modality (in iii], we witness how 'should' combines syntactically with the metaphor to express both truth-conditional and moral 'rightness'); and the metaphorical representation of the Organization and the general population as actors performing on a global stage. Through these devices a sense of equivalence and shared responsibility is appealed to. However, as illustrated in 15 (i), the conjunction of past with present continuous tense with the phrase 'to play an important part' also establishes the Organization's track record and legitimizes its continued existence.

- (15) Actor/stage
- i) IMO *has played* and continues to *play an important part* in shaping the environment. (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)
 - ii) As well as *playing its part* in addressing such global concerns . . . (Middle Temple, London)
 - iii) . . . we should all, therefore, think globally and *act* globally. (Maritime Cyprus, Cyprus)
 - iv) . . . the IMO Council selected environmental issues to take *centre stage* in the theme of this year's World Maritime Day, which will *feature in* a host of activities . . . (Odessa Ukraine)

In contrast to anthropomorphic imagery, which is utilized to emphasize the more humane qualities of the Organization, the intricacy and detail of IMO's working practices and products are associated with the structure and operation of a machine:

- (16) I could speak to you for hours about the detailed *workings* of IMO.

. . . the way we *operate* . . . (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)

The direct *output* of IMO's regulatory work is a comprehensive body of international conventions.

Specific reference to the power of the organization in bringing about global change is made through the combined imagery of vehicular movement and force, and this is further extended with reference to other political processes, e.g. (17):

- (17) IMO has been, and continues to be, the focal point for, and the *driving force* behind efforts to ensure that shipping becomes greener and cleaner. (Odessa, Ukraine)

Three basic image schemas dominate the discourse on IMO's involvement in political processes: JOURNEY, CONSTRUCTION and WAR, and these are used to justify, frame and illustrate the ongoing activities and continued mission of the Organization.

Orientational, spatial and movement schemata engendered through the JOURNEY metaphor proves valuable in conceptualizing and legitimizing IMO's political trajectory and goals. As already established (see above), a positive evaluative framework is constructed through the depiction of the Organization as a unifying leader, guide and driver (18), on a political journey involving forward movement at maximum capacity and speed (19), whilst also skilfully maintaining a steady path and accumulating an excellent 'track record' (20). Simultaneously, however, the Organization is depicted as labouring to decelerate the movement of fast-moving threatening environmental forces (21) whilst avoiding possible impediments along its path (22):

(18)

- i) [IMO] . . . can *move the world closer* to that shared vision . . . a *common approach*.
- ii) . . . issues that are driving our agenda . . . IMO has been and continues to be, the focal point for, and the *driving force* behind efforts to ensure that shipping becomes greener and cleaner. (Odessa, Ukraine)

(19) In addition to continuing *full-speed* on these and other major initiatives . . .

(20)

- i) So, while IMO looks to the Copenhagen Conference to provide political insight and *direction*, the organisation *stands* ready to enact the necessary technical and operational measures . . . IMO's excellent *track record* on environmental issues. (Maritime Cyprus, Cyprus)
- ii) To date, the review and revision process [of the Convention and code] is *on-track*.
- iii.) [IMO involved in] . . . *moving* the political process in Somalia *forward* . . . (European Security & Defence Assembly, Athens)

(21)

- i) We are now working towards the development of a robust regime that will regulate shipping at the global level and contribute to the *slowing down* of climate change . . . (Diplomatic Academy, Athens, Australia)
- ii) make a contribution to the world efforts towards *deceleration* of global warming and associated climate change.
- iii) [Piracy] it is heartening that its recent *escalation* has *mobilized* the international community in a concerted effort to prevent and repress it. (UN, New York)

(22)

- i) . . . in other words, not allow the economic crisis to *divert* us from achieving our long-term global goals . . . (OCIMF, Middle Temple, London)

The SG extends the JOURNEY metaphor in his description of Member States' adoption and implementation of IMO policy, which is similarly depicted in terms of forward movement and 'progress' (23):

(23) . . . Several States . . . have made considerable *progress* to implement its provisions . . .

In contrast to imagery of movement, allusions to the strength and support provided by the work of the Organization to Member States are made in association with the image-schema of BUILDING/CONSTRUCTION (see Musolff [2000] as discussed on p. 4 above). Feature specificity is limited to ‘foundations’ and general ‘infrastructure’; however, these mappings encapsulate the objectives of the Organization and legitimize its existence, for it is argued that without IMO the maritime industry would (at best) be unable to expand, and (at worst) collapse:

(24)

- i) . . . the direct output of IMO’s regulatory work is a comprehensive body of international conventions *supported* by literally hundreds of guidelines and recommendations . . . (Diplomatic Academy, Athens)
- ii) the work of the International Maritime Organisation in establishing the standards to *support* the vital role that shipping and its related industries play in, literally, *underpinning* the global industries.
- iii) There is no doubt that the measures put in place by IMO . . . have *laid the foundation* for substantial and continued reductions in operational and accidental pollution from ships . . . (Odessa, Ukraine)
- iv) IMO’s approach is to promote regional *capacity building* and the development of *strong infrastructures* . . . (European Security & Defence Assembly, Athens)

5.3. Global threats

In contrast to the positive qualities of humanity and strength ascribed to IMO (as discussed above), the characterization of piracy, global warming, pollution and the economic crisis are rendered evil/diseased through metaphorical representations which serve to construct a topos of ‘threat’ against which the Organization must act. This juxtaposition sets up a cognitive ontology in which IMO and the world (/audience) is aligned with all that is ‘humane’, ‘good’ and ‘healthy’, whilst global challenges are associated with negative human experience (e.g. conflict/physical injury and infection/illness). This arouses feelings of antipathy towards the subject matter under debate (the institutional agenda) and empathy towards the work of the Organization.

Pirates/the economic crisis are pejoratively de-personified as social evils/pariahs (25) (note in iii) how the image of an octopus draws on the schema of the ‘sea’ to convey the far-reaching and penetrating nature of the economic downturn), but also vermin/carriers of disease which have the power to infect (26), and therefore entities against which the Organization must take necessary action to eradicate (27) (see Charteris-Black [2006] for a similar account of the rhetoric employed by George W. Bush in his discussion of terrorism):

(25)

- i) the *scourge* of modern piracy . . .
- ii) [Piracy is] a genuine *anathema* in the 21st century. (UN, NY & European Security & Defence Assembly, Athens)

iii) . . . tentacles of the global financial crisis reach into every corner of the business. (Dalian University, China; Iran also)

(26)

- i) . . . efforts to *contain*, if not *eradicate* it, piracy continues to be an *endemic problem*
- ii) . . . to strengthen the protection of those who sail through *piracy-infested* areas . . . (OCIMF, Middle Temple, London)
- iii) . . . the global financial crisis . . . no economy or industry is *immune* to this kind of *flu sweeping* all major maritime nations . . .
- iv) . . . threat of piracy and armed robbery against ships, which has escalated to *epidemic proportions*.
- v) [Economic downturn] . . . *the symptoms may be less acute* in current circumstances, but that does not mean *the sickness has been cured or that the problem has gone away* . . .

(27) IMO's contribution to the worldwide efforts to *stem* climate change and global warming . . .

In combating these challenges the SG frames the Organization's work within the schema of (medical) research and advancement (see 27) and further alludes to the DISEASE scenario, for example:

(28) Having, last year, achieved a *breakthrough* in our efforts to reduce air pollution from ships . . .

Piracy is further negatively associated with the potentially threatening qualities of FIRE/HEAT which evoke associations with many different scenes ranging from the acts of arsonists, creating a cognitive associative chain with *anathema* (see above), to 'the fires of hell' and environmental sites of volcanic activity:

(29) . . . money generated from ransoms paid might be used *to fuel* political unrest.

the *hottest* of all contemporary piracy-infested spots in the world.

piracy *hotspots*. (General Assembly on Piracy, UN New York)

IMO and its member states, in contrast, are represented as innocent victims. Binary positions are established through the construction of military actions and actors: attack/defence (30); perpetrators/victims (31); with the Organization depicted as both engaging in the 'fight' and also assisting others in their conflict, for example:

(30)

i) Attack:

. . . *fight against* piracy and armed robbery; . . . at IMO, we are, at present *heavily engaged in the fight to protect and preserve* our environment . . . ; . . . we are *heavily engaged in the fight* to decelerate the onset of climate change. (Odessa, Ukraine)

ii) Defence:

. . . we have provided technical assistance to the Bahamas and Cuba to help them *raise their defences* should oil reach their shores . . . (Middle Temple, London)

(31)

i) In recent years we have *witnessed* this scourge. (in reference to piracy)

ii) . . . even the stress of having to sail through known hot-spots, are things that no *innocent* civilian should have to bear during their normal working lives.

iii) If safety and marine environment were themselves to fall *victim* to the financial crisis.

iv) With the container ship market claiming its own *casualties*, those that *survived* were put under enormous stresses. (26th Assembly, IMO)

6. Conclusion

This article has explored the 'mythic' representation of an international organization functioning in a socio-political sphere marked by national, ethnic and cultural difference. The identity of the Organization portrayed throughout the SG's speeches are based on a conceptualization of political/economic/moral synergy organized around a common mission and unified perspective. A discourse of diplomacy is enacted and the rhetoric of international unification practised through the attribution of similar social, political and moral values both to the organizational membership and to the audiences addressed outside of the institution. Through metaphor and other rhetorical devices the existence and work of the organization are described, validated and legitimized and a universal 'imagining' of unification in the face of international 'threat' is conceptualized.

Drawing on Wodak et al.'s (2009) concept of 'strategies' in identity construction, the macro-function of 'constructive strategies' is employed in the SG's depiction of IMO: tropes of 'unity' and 'cohesion' are dominant in the enactment of organizational identity, in addition to the strategic exploitation of boundary markers ('us' versus 'them/threatening forces') and schemata associated with human qualities and experiences (e.g. threat/fear – conflict and illness). Through repeated, recurrent and extended reference to these, the SG establishes a legal and moral code against which actions/actors may be measured and diplomacy enacted. The work of the Organization is predominantly depicted as focusing on counteracting the sources of menace and fear. Acceptance of the latter justifies the agenda and existence of his Organization.⁷

Analysis reveals great similarity in the source domains used to represent organizational identity to those used by political leaders in their construction of national identities and concerns; similar symbols and tropes are used to rouse public/group emotion and generate an ideological/ontological framework based on negative or positive associations and evaluations (see e.g. Charteris-Black, 2006; Chilton, 2006). The representation of the nation (as described by Smith, 1991) and the international organization as a 'family', for example, draws symbolically on universal associations and entailments which have been used by politicians for years to represent virtuous qualities of kinship and loyalty, arousing emotions associated with protection and defence.

However, this study also points to the importance of considering topic and situation (including the identities of the speaker/audience and the co-text/context) as these appear to influence the production of both conventional and novel metaphors. Maritime

metaphors and allusions to speaker cultural frames (e.g. Greek mythology) index speaker and audience identity; structure conceptualizations and rhetorically engender group homogeneity; whilst simultaneously create a short-cut to shared and discourse relevant/resonant and conceptually active scenarios. Investigations of situational and topic-initiated metaphors may prove fruitful in the analysis of different contexts and texts.

Analysis has demonstrated that metaphorical realizations help to formulate, conceptualize, rationalize and enact organizational identity and workplace agendas in the 21st century. Further investigation of its use in similar contexts may prove useful to the development of metaphor theory and to studies investigating sites of international integration.

Notes

1. The term 'edifying' is used as Kövesces (2010) to refer to the provision of intellectual or moral teaching.
2. Also see Semino (2008) for a valuable critique of the indebtedness of CMT to previous accounts of metaphor.
3. See Holmgreen (2008) for a critical discussion of the approaches garnered in the analysis of cognitive and pragmatic aspects of metaphor, and the strengths and difficulties of combining different approaches arising from these different traditions.
4. Drawing on Flood (1996), he distinguishes between reality and 'political myth' by defining the latter as 'an ideologically marked narrative which purports to give a true account of a set of past, present or predicted political events and which is accepted as valid in its essentials by a social group' (p. 23).
5. 'Myth' is invoked in this study, as Barthes (1973), to refer to the communication of social and political meaning through selective message construction. Certain denotations are selected which in turn engender particular connotations. The latter may involve altering or silencing alternative messages. In this regard, metaphors may be used to represent particular meanings.
6. See Semino's (2008) discussion of the problematic nature of defining a 'lexical unit'. As Semino, both individual words and entire phrasal/clausal/sentential units were considered as 'metaphorical' material in this study.
7. See Bishop and Jaworski (2003) for a complementary account of the construction of nationalism in news media.

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